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DE RUEHNO #0384/01 2531706

ZNR UUUUU ZZH

O 101706Z SEP 09

FM USMISSION USNATO

TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3352

INFO RUCNMEM/EU MEMBER STATES COLLECTIVE PRIORITY

RUEHZL/EUROPEAN POLITICAL COLLECTIVE PRIORITY

RUEHZG/NATO EU COLLECTIVE PRIORITY

RUCNOSC/ORG FOR SECURITY CO OP IN EUR COLLECTIVE PRIORITY

RUEHAD/AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI PRIORITY 0295

RUEHAS/AMEMBASSY ALGIERS PRIORITY 0574

RUEHAM/AMEMBASSY AMMAN PRIORITY 0398

RUEHUP/AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST PRIORITY 0208

RUEHEG/AMEMBASSY CAIRO PRIORITY 0157

RUEHBY/AMEMBASSY CANBERRA PRIORITY 0667

RUEHDO/AMEMBASSY DOHA PRIORITY 0177

RUEHKU/AMEMBASSY KUWAIT PRIORITY 0122

RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY 0501

RUEHLE/AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG PRIORITY 0867

RUEHMD/AMEMBASSY MADRID PRIORITY 0871

RUEHMS/AMEMBASSY MUSCAT PRIORITY 0047

RUEHRB/AMEMBASSY RABAT PRIORITY 0864

RUEHRH/AMEMBASSY RIYADH PRIORITY 0328

RUEHUL/AMEMBASSY SEOUL PRIORITY 0655

RUEHSI/AMEMBASSY TBILISI PRIORITY 5858

RUEHTV/AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV PRIORITY 0907

RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO PRIORITY 0979

RUEHTU/AMEMBASSY TUNIS PRIORITY 0808

RUEHWR/AMEMBASSY WARSAW PRIORITY 4194

RUEHWL/AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON PRIORITY 0072

RUEHFL/AMCONSUL FLORENCE PRIORITY 0002

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 06 USNATO 000384

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [NATO](#) [PREL](#) [MARR](#) [MOPS](#) [PK](#) [UK](#) [XG](#) [RS](#)

SUBJECT: STRATEGIC CONCEPT: GROUP OF EXPERTS MET WITH  
PERMREPS ON SEPTEMBER 7

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¶1. (SBU) SUMMARY: In the September 7 first meeting of the Group of

Experts (GoE) with the North Atlantic Council (NAC) on the NATO new Strategic Concept (SC) review, both the Secretary General (SYG) and former Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, the GoE's chairperson, stressed the importance of a transparent, inclusive, and consultative process. In interventions given by 24 out of the 28 Allies, some broad themes and general consensus emerged: the new SC should be concise and clear policy document, Article 5 of the Washington Treaty remains the core of NATO, territorial defense and out-of-area operations are not contradictory, the relationship with Russia needs to be an area of focus, Comprehensive Approach and dealing with international actors are key to operational success, and relations with other

international actors are an integral part of NATO. Luxembourg and Slovenia announced during the NAC that they will host the first and second NATO-sponsored SC seminars in October and November, respectively. END SUMMARY

¶2. (SBU) In the first NAC meeting with the Group of Experts (GoE) for the new Strategic Concept (SC), Secretary General Rasmussen said he intended to fully respect and fulfill the mandate given to him at the Strasbourg-Kehl Summit of developing the new SC. He introduced each member of the GoE and said their objective was to present to him by May 1, 2010, their analysis and recommendations for the SC, based upon the results of the GoE's external consultations

and internal reflections. This will be preceded by an interim progress report to be done in time for the December 2009 foreign ministerial. He stressed the GoE's independence, noting that each member had been appointed in their personal capacities. As such, they should contribute freely, unconstrained by national positions. The SYG said the process will play a key role in the quality of the final product, it should be guided by principles of inclusiveness, transparency, and it should be participatory ) he intends to keep the Council involved.

¶3. (SBU) Regarding the reflection phase, the SYG said he wanted to involve the strategic community in Allied nations in the consideration of the challenges NATO faces, adding that he expected the NAC to both actively contribute at HQ and ensure capital participation. The experts should also participate in consultation by visiting capitals in groups or individually, in addition to consultations on the margins of the NATO-sponsored seminars. The GoE will inform the Council both in December and April; the group's internal and capital consultations are to remain strictly confidential.

¶4. (SBU) Former Secretary Madeleine Albright, the GoE's chair, assured Allies that the group would look at all the various issues confronting NATO and would establish issues of focus and working methodologies. She voiced her commitment that the experts' work would be independent, but transparent.

¶5. (SBU) Denmark, the first of 24 nations to speak, raised seven points, which the UK, Germany, and many others later endorsed and referred to:

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- Denmark favored a concise and policy oriented SC rather than a comprehensive political document;
- The SC should focus on the areas where NATO can add value;
- The SC will need to be clear on what NATO's focus should be and should set out priorities, with the prioritization of tasks and the carrying-out of operations based on an equitable sharing of resources;
- The Alliance should be preserved as the primary forum for trans-Atlantic dialogue and provider of security;
- Denmark said the activation of a more deployable force structure was crucial; at the same time, it saw no contradiction between territorial defense and out-of-area operations;
- The Comprehensive Approach needs to be made an integral part of NATO; and
- Focus needed to be given to developing NATO-EU relationships.

Denmark further urged that the SYG and the GoE to be bold, challenging, and innovative in approach and methodology.

¶6. (SBU) Luxembourg announced it would host the first seminar in mid-October. It stressed that all Allied governments should be involved in the SC process given the new challenges, new threats, and new areas of deployment they share. It expressed confidence that the Alliance would live up to this charge.

¶7. (SBU) Romania threw its full support behind the GoE, stressing that the GoE was the Alliance's group, not just the SYG's group. It noted that process plays an important role in strengthening Alliance cohesion. Romania welcomed visits by the GoE. It did not object to a visit to Russia, but thought it should be balanced with visits to potential aspirant countries.

¶8. (SBU) Norway was pleased to see the GoE's openness since Norway's candidate was not chosen, and Norway expected the Council to be actively involved in the next stage. Norway

also favored a concise and compact SC that was shorter and more precise than the previous ones. On substance, Norway focused on the following points:

- The SC should have clear references to what NATO faces on its own territory and at its periphery. It also needed to have language on Article 5, Alliance solidarity, and indivisibility of security;
- The SC should contain carefully calibrated language on arms control, disarmament, and non-proliferation; and
- The SC needs to find formulations for other international actors, noting the important with relations with the UN and the EU.

¶9. (SBU) Spain emphasized that the SC should reaffirm the values of the Washington Treaty and the principle of the indivisibility of security. Spain also said that the seminars should have participation from civil society, noting the importance of public opinion. Spain wanted to consolidate the principles of Comprehensive Approach in the new SC and joined Norway's position on disarmament. It also placed importance on partnerships to the east and the south, making the connection that--given the operations in Afghanistan and Kosovo--NATO has the greatest part of its

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operations are in Muslim countries. It added that NATO's partnership structures for the Mediterranean and the broader Middle East--the Mediterranean Dialogue and Istanbul Cooperation Initiative--are closely scrutinized by the Muslim world. To the east, Spain said NATO needed to find a way to effectively cooperate with Russia, arguing that Russia was not the former Soviet Union.

¶10. (SBU) Turkey recognized that the GoE's independent analysis would be important, but pointed out ultimately it was the Allies, responsibility to make the hard decisions. Turkey said that on form and structure the SC needed to reflect a balance between length and utility ) it should be relatively short, but detailed enough to provide clear guidance. Turkey said that many would look at the SC to examine NATO's new vision. Further, the SC should contain the following elements:

- Underline the role of consultation and consensus building, the importance of cohesion, solidarity, and indivisibility in the trans-Atlantic link;
- Consider threats new and old;
- Counter terrorism;
- The desire to work with partners ) Russia is an indispensable actor NATO needs to work with, and this can be done in a mutually respectful manner;
- Working with international actors, such as the UN and the EU; and
- The clear need to enhance the Strategic Framework with the EU.

Turkey also argued that that many elements in the current Strategic Concept were still relevant. It added that while new issues do need to be addressed, the Alliance should not try to reinvent the wheel.

¶11. (SBU) Poland echoed Turkey's point that many elements in the 1999 SC were still valid. It said that collective defense was the core of NATO and must remain valid. Poland stressed that Article 5 was no less relevant today and should still be a part of our everyday business. Poland raised as areas of focus: enlargement, realistic threat assessments, and EU-NATO strategic partnership.

¶12. (SBU) Slovenia announced it would host the second seminar some time in November. It deemed both the process and the substance important and supported a dialogue with partners and international actors. It underscored that both old and new Allies needed to be able to identify with the new SC, The SC needed to balance between NATO's

founding purpose and out of area operations, preserve the trans-Atlantic link, form a strategic partnership with Russia, address Comprehensive Approach, defense transformation, and strategic communication.

¶13. (SBU) Estonia expressed high hopes for the work ahead and echoed Turkey's point that though some elements of the 1999 SC are outdated, many points remain valid and should not be renegotiated unless nations wanted to open up old debates. On the point of territorial defense, Estonia warned that we must accept that conventional war in Europe was still a possibility. Referencing the 2007 cyber attack, Estonia said, however, that it does not believe in diluting Article 5 and that every new threat should be

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linked to it. Instead, Article 5 should be kept as a last resort. Germany later reinforced this point.

¶14. (SBU) The UK came in and subscribed to the Danish intervention in its entirety, adding an additional three points:

- A great deal in the 1999 SC remains valid, but the graphic demonstration of 9/11 showed that security in the territory cannot be seen in isolation from elsewhere, and the out-of-area/expeditionary capability notion needed to find its way into the new SC;
- A constructive and substantive partnership with Russia will need to be a part of the new SC; and
- The notion of a forward looking and ambitious reform agenda was needed to underpin the new SC.

¶15. (SBU) Hungary said it was reassured by statements of the Secretary General and Albright that all opinions would be heard, but underscored that in the end the SC was a document that needed to be fully endorsed and signed on by all 28 Allies. It said that this would require compromise, flexibility, transparency, and close contact. Hungary also said it wanted a clear and concise new SC that builds on the 1999 SC. It should address Article 5, setting out in clear and unambiguous terms that NATO is ready, willing, and able to defend its members.

¶16. (SBU) Italy said the Declaration on Alliance Security agreed in April 2009 stated where the Alliance is at present and it expected from the GoE additional thinking to look into the future. Italy said it expected the Alliance to look at Afghanistan, while stressing that the Strategic Concept must also look beyond Afghanistan. Further, Italy expected in the new SC to include:

- A balancing between traditional threat and new asymmetrical threats;
- A balancing of Article 5 and Articles 4 and 10;
- Transparency in the process both internally and externally, as the rest of the world will want to know what NATO is doing;
- Treatment of NATO-EU relations, arms control, and Comprehensive approach.

Italy also favored a short and clear document, saying that "short is beautiful, clarity is beautiful. The general public must understand it and others can see what NATO is up to."

¶17. (SBU) The Czech Republic offered three points for consideration:

- The temptation to go into an exhaustive list of threats should be avoided. The Alliance should keep to areas where NATO has a say and occupies a leading role;
- The SC should define what the Alliance does and will do outside of the Alliance area; and
- In order to reach 100 percent consensus, frequent and constant interaction between the GoE and capitals will be

necessary.

¶18. (SBU) Canada noted that the SYG and the GoE have a strong remit from the Heads of State and Government and put

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forward its desire for a jargon-free, concise and short new SC that is both forward looking and well informed by current operations. It pointed to the Washington Treaty as a good starting point, highlighting the "Canadian" Article 2 as a place to reaffirm the original NATO values in a very different world. Characterizing it as a "fascinating and a complex task," Canada emphasized that at the end of the day, this process needs to achieve a substantive outcome with clear political guidance.

19.(SBU) The U.S. pointed out that the GoE, which represents not 12 countries (Note: a reference to the number of experts in the Group, each from a different country) but the entire Alliance, enjoys an independence that allows it to ask hard questions and expose differences which the Allied members in their national capacities are less able to do. The experts can not only expose the points of contention and controversy, but also offer a way ahead and strategic guidance. The U.S. endorsed, like many others, a short and concise document that was visionary. It shared Canada's view that the Washington Treaty offers a good starting point. In an era of globalization, it was important that we explain this Alliance in way that makes its roles and purposes understandable to the average person.

¶20. (SBU) Bulgaria noted several priorities: preserving NATO as a place for consultation; Article 5; the Euro-Atlantic link; a commitment to further develop partner nations; the articulation and securing of a vision of Europe, who le and free; and Russia.

¶21. (SBU) Greece placed its priorities on: preserving NATO as a political-military alliance; collective defense and the trans-Atlantic link; keeping up with new challenges, risks and threats; updating of Alliance capacities; and promoting cooperation and dialogue with partners.

¶22. (SBU) Later interventions, as much of what had been said elicited broad agreement, were kept brief. France intervened to note the importance of the process and inclusiveness, adding that it should lead to concrete measures in order to adapt the Alliance to the new security environment. Germany endorsed in full the Danish remarks, aligned itself with Norway's position on arms control, and cited Estonia's comment that not every threat should be related to Article 5 but that a balance should be struck between Article 5 and other issues. Iceland added climate change and economic security to the list of areas to examine while adding that collective defense was the backbone of the Alliance and the trans-Atlantic link is indispensable. Belgium mentioned many of the priorities already cited by others: Comprehensive approach ) relations with the EU and the UN; disarmament and arms-control; relations with Russia; and dialogue with the neighbors of the Alliance. The Netherlands, Croatia, and Lithuania all expressed general agreement with everything said before.

¶23. (SBU) In response, Albright said that she listened carefully to each statement and took them to heart. She assured Allies that she will stay in close touch, give interim updates, and reach out generally, including to non-NATO members. In doing so, she will take "lessons

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learned" into account. She concluded by saying that she will not shrink from looking at the difficult questions as

"you need to break eggs to make an omelet."

¶24. (SBU) While noting that it was too early to comment on substance, Rasmussen said that on procedure, process, and form, the purpose of the new SC should be to create consensus on what NATO's core tasks are in the current and future security environment, thereby serving as a guiding instrument for political and military bodies. The new SC should be less wordy and should be written in understandable language. It should address a broader group and public, including reaching out to the female audience. In answering a question from the UK on how to channel the vast interest on the part of think tanks in the new SC, the SYG encouraged everyone to participate in as many SC related events as possible as it is a common responsibility to contribute to this process.  
DAALDER